A Second TESTIMONY CONCERNING Oaths & Swearing;

IN

Answer to a Book entituled, *The Case of the Quakers relating to Oathes stated by* J. S.

OR

An *Appendix* to a Book written in the Year 1668. in Answer to *Allan Smallwood* (*D. D.* as he stiles himself.)

Wherein is fully cleared the Command of Christ, and Practice of the Apostles concerning Swearing, from the Corrupt Glosses, Limited Sense and Meaning of *J. S.*

By *Gervase Benson.*

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said of old Time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform thine Oaths to the Lord; But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, for it is the Throne of God, neither by the Earth, &c. but let your Yea be Yea, and Nay Nay; for whatsoever is more then these cometh of Evil, Mat. 5. 33, 34, 35.

But above all Things, my Brethren, Swear not, neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other Oath; but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay Nay, lest you fall into Condemnation, Jam. 5. 12.

Printed in the Year 1675.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA
DUM SPIRO SPERO

A Second TESTIMONY CONCERNING Oaths & Swearing, &c.

READER,

I Having in the Year 1668. given forth a true Teſtimony concerning Oaths and Swearing, and therein cleared the Command of Chriſt, *Mat.* 5. 34. *&c. Swear not at all, &c.* And the Apoſtle *James Jam.*5.12. *Above all Things my Brethren ſwear not, &c.* from the corrupt Gloſſes, limited Sence and Meanings of *Alan Smallwood*, &c. as in and by the ſaid Teſtimony, printed in the Year aforeſaid, doth and may appear, unto which I neither received Anſwer nor Reply; but now of late, *viz.* in this preſent Year 1674. there came to my Hands a Book, entituled, *The Caſe of the* Quakers, *relating to Oaths ſtated*, by one *J. S.* as its ſaid, wherein he firſt hath aſſerted, Sect. 1. *That* Chriſtians *of the higheſt Rank and greateſt Proficiency, may lawfully in ſome Caſes confirm the Truth with an Oath*, and that they ſo may do, he pretends to prove from the Practice and Example of the Apoſtle *Paul, who both knew the Mind of Chriſt, and ſerved God in the Spirit in the Goſpel of his Son, and yet* as *J. S.* pretends, *did frequently confirm what he aſſerted in ſuch like Forms of ſacred Oathes as theſe*, viz. *God is my Witneſs*, Rom. 1. 9. *I ſay the Truth in Chriſt, I lye not, my Conſcience bearing me Witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 9. 1. *I call God for a Record upon my Soul*, 2 Cor. 1. 23. *The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt knows that I lye not*, 2 Cor. 11. 37. *together with* Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Theſ. 2. 10. *Ye are Witneſſes and God alſo; and that theſe Forms of Speech are ſacred Oaths, is manifeſt;*

aith *J. S. from* Gen. 31. 50, 53. *where* Jacob *and* Laban *are ſaid to ſwear in theſe Form of Words, So God is Witneſs between thee and me, &c.* To which for Anſwer I ſay, That theſe Forms of Speech uſed by the Apoſtle, and by *Jacob* and *Laban*, viz. *So God is Witneſs between thee and me; God is my Witneſs, &c.* are of themſelves (without the Addition of ſomewhat more, as an outward Sign or Pledge) neither Oath or Swearing, which Addition of ſomewhat more, as an outward Sign or Pledge, was that which then gave the Denomination of an Oath or Swearing unto the Forms of Speech formerly uſed in Witneſs-bearing, before any Oath or Swearing was; for it is evident from the Practice of the holy Men of God, as it is recorded in the Scriptures of Truth, that there was and is a Diverſity or Difference (worthy of Obſervation for the better clearing of my Affirmation in this Particular) between an Oath or Swearing and witneſs-bearing; and that the holy Men of God did put a Difference betwixt Swearing and Witneſs-bearing, is evident from the Scriptures, which will the more clearly appear, if it be obſerved, that Witneſs-bearing was, and the Name of God was uſed in Witneſs-bearing before any Oath or Swearing was; for before the Fall there was neither Oath or Swearing, and yet *Eve* before the Fall did in Witneſs-Bearing uſe the Name of God, when ſhe in Anſwer to the Serpents Queſtion, ſaid, *Yea, God hath ſaid, ye ſhall not eat, &c.* Gen. 3. 3. And *Sarah* after the Fall, and before any ſacred Oath or Swearing was, uſed the like Form of Speech as *Laban* did in the Place before-mentioned, when ſhe ſaid to *Abraham, The Lord judge between thee and me*, Gen. 16. 5. from which Scriptures it is evident, that Witneſs-bearing was before any Oath or Swearing; and alſo, that the Name of God was uſed in Witneſs-bearing before any Swearing was; ſo that which was before any ſacred Oath or Swearing was of it ſelf, is neither Oath or Swearing, without the Addition of ſomewhat more as aforeſaid. And it is further evident by the Scriptures Teſtimony, that the holy Men of God in Cauſes where no Oath or Swearing was required by the Law, did in Witneſs-bearing call God to witneſs, and uſed Atteſtations of the Name of God, when they did not ſwear at all; as for Inſtances, *Moſes* called *Heaven and Earth to Record*, Deut.

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24. 26. Deut. 30. 19. Job ſaid, *My Witneſs is in Heaven and my Record is on high*, Job 16. 19. And the People of *Iſrael* ſpeaking to *Jeremy*, ſaid, *The Lord be Witneſs of Truth and Faith betwixt us*, Jer. 42. 5. The Prophet *Micha* alſo ſaid, *Hear all ye People, hearken thou Earth and all that therein is, and let the Lord God be Witneſs againſt you*, Mich. 1. 2. And the Prophet *Malachy* told the Prieſts and People of *Jeruſalem* and *Judah*, *That the Lord God had been a Witneſs between them and the Wife of their Youth*, Mal. 2. 14. From all which Teſtimonies it is evident, that the Servants of the Lord upon urgent Occaſions, where no Oath was required by the Law, did in VVitneſs-bearing call God to VVitneſs, and uſed Atteſtations of the Name of God in their VVitneſs-bearing, when they did not ſwear at all; and for the further manifeſting of that Part of my Affirmation, *viz.* That the Forms of Speech uſed by *Jacob* and *Laban*, and by the Apoſtle and others, before-mentioned, of themſelves, without adding of ſomewhat more, as an outward Sign or Pledge, are neither Oathes or Swearing. It is worthy of Obſervation, that where mention is made of an Oath or Swearing in the Scriptures of Truth, there is alſo mention made of ſome outward Sign or Pledge, which was added to the Forms of Speech by them uſed, which ſomewhat more being added, was that which gave the Denomination of an Oath or Swearing to the Forms of Speech, without which Addition of ſomewhat more then Yea and Nay, as a Sign or Pledge, the Forms of Speech of themſelves was neither Legal Oath or Swearing; as for Example, Gen. 31. 44. to ver. 54. It is ſaid, *Come let us make a Covenant, I and thou, which may be a Witneſs between thee and me; then took* Jacob *a Stone, and ſet it up as a Pillar; and* Jacob *ſaid to his Brethren, gather Stones, and they brought Stones, and made a Heap; and* Laban *ſaid, this Heap is Witneſs between me and thee, there is no Man with us, behold God is Witneſs between me and thee: Moreover,* Laban *ſaid to* Jacob, *Behold this Heap, and behold the Pillar, the Heap ſhall be Witneſs, and the Pillar ſhall be Witneſs, and the God of* Abraham, *&c. be Judge between us; but* Jacob *ſware by the Fear of his Father* Iſaac. The like Example we find, *Gen.* 21. 27. *to* 31. *Gen.* 24. 2, 3. where *Abraham cauſed his Servant to put his Hand under his Thigh,*

Thigh, and to ſwear, &c. The like we read, *Gen.* 47.29,31. where *Iſrael* call'd his Son *Joſeph* to *put his Hand under his Thigh, and ſaid, Swear unto me, and he ſware unto him, &c.* From all which Examples it is evident, That there was an Addition (of ſomewhat more as an outward Sign or Pledge) to the Forms of Speech by the Men of God uſed, which was that that gave to the Form of Words the Denomination of an Oath or Swearing, without which Addition of ſomewhat more, as an outward Sign or Pledge; the Words, *God is Witneſs, &c.* of themſelves neither were nor are either Legal Oath or Swearing, or ſo intended, or accepted by the holy Men of God, mentioned in the Scriptures of Truth; Conform hereunto is the daily Practice obſerved in the Courts of Judicature in this and other Nations, when and where any Oath or Swearing is required in VVitneſs-bearing; ſo that the laying aſide of an Oath or Swearing in VVitneſs-bearing, is not the deſtroying of VVitneſs-bearing, but the reducing it unto its Original Purity and Simplicity, as it was in the Beginning, before any Oath or Swearing was: And now by what is before-ſaid it is evident, that the Forms of Speech uſed by *Laban* and *Jacob* in their Day, and the Forms of Speech uſed by the Apoſtle *Paul* in his Day, and now uſed by the People of God called *Quakers* in their Witneſs-bearing, in and of themſelves, neither were nor are any Legal Oath or Swearing, without the Addition of ſomewhat more, as an outward Sign or Pledge, which Addition being more then Yea and Nay, is therefore in Obedience to the Command of Chriſt denyed, the Original Ground or Cauſe thereof in Man being Evil; and therefore *Chriſtians* in Chriſt Jeſus, and in the Faith of him, may not do Evil, knowing that no Good can come to any by doing Evil. And for further Anſwer I ſay, That it is evident from the Scriptures Teſtimony, that the Apoſtle *Paul*, as he was *made an able Miniſter of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit; ſo alſo he was a Witneſs of thoſe Things which he had received of Chriſt, and of the Things which he had ſeen*, Acts 26. 16. and having learned of the Spirit of God to put a Difference between Names and Things that differ, and ſo between an Oath or Swearing, that was temporary, and might be ſhaken, and true Witneſs-bearing,

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ing, which was Eternal, and therefore was and is to abide in the House of God forever: And therefore in his Testimony for God, and of the Truth of what he writ and declared to the Churches of Christ, in his Witness-bearing did (as the People of God had in all Ages done before) upon Occasion of great Concern, call God to Witness, or appeal to the Witness of God in Men, concerning the Truth of what he writ unto them, or declared among them; and so by Manifestation of the Truth, he *commended himself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God*, 2 Cor. 4. 2. without observing any set Form of Words, or adding of any outward Sign or Pledge, whereby it might be distinguished from Witness bearing, and known to be an Oath; for how could the Apostle, who was dead to the Law, by which an Oath or Swearing in some Cases was required, live in the frequent Practice of Swearing, contrary to the Command of Christ in the Gospel, *Swear not at all, &c.* and yet *have the Testimony of the Spirit of God, that he served God in the Spirit, in the Gospel of his Son, and not in the Oldness of the Letter?* Rom. 7. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 23. For if he had frequently confirmed his Sayings with an Oath, he had been a common Swearer, which would rather have weakened then confirmed his Testimony amongst the Saints of God, because the Saints of God do give little more Credit to a common Swearer then to a Lyar: Moreover if the Apostle had frequently sworn, then had he not walked according to the Rule of the Gospel, but according to the Law in the Letter, because it is evident, that there is no Command of Christ in the Gospel for any Man in any Case to swear, or to confirm their Sayings with an Oath; but on the contrary, an express Command of Christ, *I say unto you, Swear not at all:* Now these Things being so, as afore is said, I may conclude, That there being no Example, Command or Precept in the Gospel of Christ, for any of the Disciples of Christ Jesus to confirm the Truth of their Sayings with an Oath, that therefore no *Christian* in Christ Jesus is oblieged to swear at all, and that therefore *J. S.* is blame-worthy in asserting, that the Apostle *Paul* did frequently confirm what he asserted with an Oath; and that the *Quakers* do actually swear, even then when they say, they

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cannot ſwear. And now I proceed to his ſecond *Argument*, where he ſaith,

Arg. 2. *That without the Interpoſition of an Oath, it is impoſſible in many Caſes, that Juſtice can be adminiſtred according to the Rule of the Goſpel*; and he inſtances in one Caſe for all, *Exod.* 22. 20, 21. *If a Man deliver to his Neighbour an Ox, or Aſs, or Sheep to keep, and it dye, or be hurt, or driven away, no Man ſeeing it; then ſhall an Oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his Hand to his Neighbours Goods, and the Owner of it ſhall accept thereof, and he ſhall not make it good; it is the Righteous God's Will, that Juſtice be adminiſtred in this and the like Caſes; but in ſuch Caſes* (ſaith *J. S.*) *it cannot be determined according to the Evangelical Rule, who ſhall bear the Loſs, without the Interpoſition of an Oath; for if the Man's bare Word be taken for the Proof of his Innocency, the Controverſie will be decided by one only Witneſs, directly againſt Chriſt's Precepts,* Mat. 18. 16. *That in the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes every Word may be eſtabliſhed; therefore* (ſaith *J. S.*) *the guiltleſs Party in ſuch Caſes muſt in Vindication of his Innocency take in God to witneſs with him, that ſo the Matter may be decided by two Witneſſes at leaſt, &c.*

For Anſwer to all which I firſt do ſay, That *J. S.* in aſſerting, that without the Interpoſition of an Oath, 'tis impoſſible in ſuch Caſes, that Juſtice can be adminiſtred according to the Rule of the Goſpel, hath not only endeavoured to pervert the Rule of the Goſpel, but alſo to confound an Oath and Witneſs-bearing, intimating by his Aſſertion, as if no true Witneſs ever was or could be born without the Interpoſition of an Oath; the contrary whereof is evident from Chriſt's Precept in the Place by *J. S.* mentioned, where Chriſt ſaith, *That by the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes every Word is to be eſtabliſhed*, without any mention of an Oath or Swearing; which Precept of Chriſt is conſonant to that Precept of his, *Mat* 5. 34. *&c. Swear not at all, &c.* And that Witneſs bearing was before any Oath was, is evident from what is before ſaid in Anſwer to his firſt *Argument*, and was alſo uſed by the holy Men of God in all Ages, without

without the Interposition of an Oath, save only in such Cases where an Oath was required by the Law or first Covenant.

Secondly, I for further Answer say, That as in an Oath under the Law, the Lord was called to Witness with the innocent Party; so under the Gospel, in Witness-bearing the Name of God, or God himself is called to Witness, as where the Apostle *Paul* saith, *God is my Witness*; *I call God for a Record upon my Soul, &c.* By which Appeals unto God in Witness-bearing (without an Oath) the Power and Omniscience of almighty God is acknowledged, in discerning whether Truth be spoken, and in punishing them that bear false Witness, as much as under the Law in Cases where an Oath was required; and the Lyar is excluded the Kingdom of Heaven as well as the false Swearer: So that according to Christ's Precept, by the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word and every Case may be established under the Gospel, without any obstructing of Justice, or patronizing of Injustice; and yet in such Case the Party's bare Word is not taken, nor his Witness, being true, single; for as the Apostle said, Rom. 8.6. *The Spirit it self* (which is the greater Witness) *beareth witness with Man's Spirit*; and so God is a Witness for the Innocent Party, and with him, and hath a Witness for him in Mens Consciences; and therefore Swearing or the Interposition of an Oath in such Cases, is so far from being a necessary Duty under the Gospel, as it amounteth to be a Transgression of the Law of Christ to all his Disciples, Mat. 5. 34. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all, &c.* And now I proceed to his third *Argument*, wherein he asserts,

Arg. 3. *That the Spirit of Christ in the Old Testament in the Prophets, did commend Swearing by God, as that which was to be the Practice of his Elect Servants in the Christian Church, after his Rejection of the* Jews, *and chusing the* Gentiles, *&c.* and for the Proof of his Assumption he quotes *Isa* 65. 15. *And ye shall leave your Name for a Curse to my Chosen: that is* (saith J. S.) *the People that God shall chuse from among the* Gentiles, *shall use your Name* (*the Name of a* Jew) *in Execration, when they have a Mind to denounce a Curse, &c. paralel* (saith J. S.) *to that of* Jer. 29. 22. *Of them shall be taken up a Curse by all the Cap-*

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tivity of Judah, *&c. saying, the Lord make thee like* Ahab *and* Zedekiah (two false Prophets) *he that bleſſeth himſelf in the Earth, ſhall bleſs himſelf in the God of Truth, and he that ſweareth in the Earth, ſhall ſwear by the God of Truth, &c.*

Anſwer, Firſt, I do deny his Aſſumption, that the Spirit of the Lord did ſo commend Swearing as a Practice to continue in the *Chriſtian Church* amongſt Chriſt's Diſciples, *Jews* or *Gentiles*. *Secondly,* I ſay, that the Scriptures by J.S. quoted do no more prove Swearing then Curſing, to be lawful under the Goſpel, which for *J. S.* or any other to affirm, is to preach another Doctrine then Chriſt and his Apoſtles preached, as is evident from *Mat.* 5. 42, 43. where Chriſt ſaid, *That it hath been ſaid, thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy; but I ſay unto you, love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you.* And the Apoſtle *Paul, Rom.* 12. 14. ſaith, *Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not.* Luke 6. 28. *Bleſs them that curſe you, and pray for them that deſpightfully uſe you.* And Chriſt ſaith, *Mat.* 5. 34. *&c. But I ſay unto you, Swear not at all.* And the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 5. 12. ſaith; *Above all Things my Brethren ſwear not, &c.* So that J. S. having tranſgreſſed the Doctrine of Chriſt, and brought another Doctrine, is not to be received, neither bid *God ſpeed,* according to 2 *John* 9. 10. And J. S. his Error and falſe Concluſion is further apparent, in that he reſtraineth that to the Nature of the Worſhip of God, which is ſpiritual and Eternal, unto the Act or Performance, which at the Time of giving forth of that Prophecy, was (with Reſpect to thoſe external ſhadowy Things) by Nature temporary and changeable; for many of the Prophecies were given forth by figurative and dark Shadows of Chriſt, who was and is the Subſtance; and therefore by Bleſſing and Swearing under the Law, was meant (as they had Reference to the Goſpel-times) the praiſing God, confeſſing to him, and worſhipping him in Spirit and in Truth, according to the Goſpel of his Son, viz. *in Newneſs of the Spirit, and not in the Oldneſs of the Letter.* And as to that Scripture, *Ier.* 29. 22. it is evident from the Text it ſelf, that it was the People of the Captivity of *Judah* (and not the *Gentile*-Converts) that were Captives in *Babel*, that were to take up that Curſe, after their Return, againſt *Ahab* and *Zedekiah*,

kiah, which had propheſied Lyes unto them in the Name of the Lord; therefore let J. S. beware: So that from theſe two Texts of Scripture there is no Ground for any of the Diſciples of Chriſt to ſwear by the God of Truth, contrary to the Command of Chriſt, who is their only Law-giver in Matters of Faith and Worſhip; for in Chriſt, the great Prophet, all Signs Prophecies and Miracles were to meet, and be by him diſpenſed according to the Will of God. And now I proceed to J. S's fourth *Argument*, which is as he ſaith,

Arg. 4. *That that which the Spirit of Chriſt, that was in the Prophets, foretold ſhould be done in the Time of the Goſpel by the Lord's People, as an Evidence of their Converſion to the* Lord, *may lawfully be done by* Chriſtians: *But the Spirit of Chriſt* (*ſaith* J. S.) *which was in the Prophets foretold, that in the Times of the Goſpel the* Lord's *People ſhould ſwear by his Name, as an Evidence of their Converſion to the* Lord; *therefore* (*ſaith* J. S.) *a* Chriſtian *may lawfully ſwear by the* Lord's *Name.*

To which for Anſwer I ſay, That J. S. in affirming that the Spirit of Chriſt in the Prophets foretold, that in the Times of the Goſpel the Lord's People ſhould ſwear by his Name, as an Evidence of their Converſion to the Lord, hath in ſo affirming oppoſed the Doctrine of the Apoſtles and Miniſters of Chriſt, and in ſo doing hath manifeſted himſelf to be no Miniſter of the Spirit of Chriſt, nor of the Goſpel; for its evident, that the Apoſtles and Miniſters of Chriſt, who were able Miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit, did teſtifie, *That whoſoever ſhould call on the Name of the Lord, ſhould be ſaved*, Acts 2.10. and the End of their Care & Pains in preaching & writing was, *That People* (*whether* Jews *or* Gentiles) *ſhould believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that in believing* (and not by ſwearing) *they might have Life through his Name*, John 20.31. And the Apoſtle *Paul* teſtified, *That he that confeſſeth with his Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhall believe in his Heart that God raiſed him from the Dead, ſhall be ſaved; for with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteouſneſs, and with the Tongue confeſſeth unto Salvation*, Rom. 10.9, 10, 11, 12. And when the Eunuch asked *Philip, what hindered him to be baptized;*

Philip ſaid unto him, *If thou believeſt with all thy Heart, thou mayeſt*; and the Eunuch anſwered and ſaid (but did not ſwear) *I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*; *and thereupon* Philip *did baptize him*, Acts 8. 36, 37, 38. And when the Keeper of the Priſon ſaid unto *Paul* and *Sylas*, *Sirs, what ſhall I do to be ſaved*? they ſaid, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved and thy Houſe*, Acts 16. 30, 31. So that the Eunuch and the Keeper of the Priſon confeſſing their Belief in Chriſt the Son of God, was all the outward Evidence that the Apoſtles required of their Converſion unto God. And *Peter* ſaid, Acts 10. 43. *That unto Chriſt all the Prophets did bear witneſs, that through his Name all that believe* (mark, it is not ſaid, all that ſwear) *ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins*. And thoſe that were pricked in their Hearts when they heard *Peter*'s Sermon, ſaid unto *Peter* and the reſt of the Apoſtles, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do*? *to whom* Peter *anſwering ſaid, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts. 2. 37. and Acts 13. 38, 39. It is ſaid, *That the Apoſtle preached through the Name of Chriſt the Forgiveneſs of Sins, and that by him all that believe are juſtified from all Things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of* Moſes. So that although by the Law of *Moſes* thoſe who were under it (and in Caſes where an Oath was by the Law required) could not be freed from an Oath; yet by the *Law of Chriſt*, *and the Power of the Endleſs Life*, Heb. 7. 6. all the Diſciples of Chriſt are freed and juſtified by Chriſt from all Oathes and Swearing under the Goſpel: And by confeſſing Chriſt to be the Son of God, and believing in him, we receive Chriſt, and by receiving of him, he dwelleth in us, and we in him, in whom God is well pleaſed to accept of us, and in whom, after that we believe, we are ſealed with the Spirit of Promiſe, which is the Evidence and Earneſt of our Inheritance, according to *Epheſ.* 1. 6, 13, 14. without any Oath or Swearing: So that we have a *Cloud* of Witneſſes, that the Apoſtles and Miniſters of Chriſt did not require of any Converts, *Jew* or *Gentile*, any Oath or ſwearing, as an Evidence of their *Converſion* unto God; but that they ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of God, and repent

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and believe the Gospel, and thereupon (without any Oath or swearing) they were baptized, and received the Promise of God, which is the Holy Ghost: Now these Things being so, I do therefore deny *J. S.* his *Assumption and Conclusion*.

But J. S. further saith, *That the Lord sware by himself, &c. that unto him every Knee shall bow, and every Tongue shall swear*, Isa. 45. 23. and also saith, *that this Prophecy is to receive its Accomplishment in Gospel-Times*, and *that swearing to the Lord is here prophesied of, as that Divine Service and Homage, by the performing whereof* Gentile-*Converts were to declare their owning of, and Conversion to the true God, &c. And for further Proof* (as he saith) *he quotes* Isa. 19. 18. *&c. In that Day shall five Cities of the Land of* Egypt *speak the Language of* Canaan, *and swear to the Lord of Hosts; there shall be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of* Egypt, *and a Pillar to the Lord at the Borders thereof, and it shall be for a Sign and for a Witness unto the Lord of Hosts in the Land of* Egypt; *for they shall cry unto the Lord, and he shall send them a Saviour; and the Lord shall be known unto* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *shall know the Lord in that Day, and shall do Sacrifice and Oblation; yea, they shall vow a Vow unto the Lord, and perform it, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them, &c.*

For Answer to all which I say, That the carnal Man, as the carnal *Jew*, looks for the fulfilling of the Letter, but the spiritual Man looks for the Spirit; for the *Christians* Laws and Priviledges under the Gospel are all spiritual, and so are their Ordinances; now J. S. being carnally-minded, *cannot discern the Things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. But instead of distinguishing aright between the Ordinances under the Law and the Ordinances under the Gospel, between an Oath and VVitness-bearing, hath confounded them together; and though he read *Moses* and the Prophets, yet it is evident by his Affirmations aforesaid, that he knoweth not the Voice of God that spoke in the Prophets, no more then those mentioned Acts 13. 27. and being unlearned in the School of Christ, hath rendered the Prophets Words literally, which the Apostle *Paul*, who was a Minister of the Spirit, renders spiritually, as is evident from Rom. 14. 9, 10. *As I live, saith*

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the *Lord, every Knee shall bow to me, and every Tongue shall confess to God,* And *Phil.* 2 10, 11. it is said, *That at the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow, both of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth, and that every Tongue shall confess* (mark, it is not said swear) *that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* From which Scriptures it is evident, that as that Promise or Prophecy, *Isa.* 45. 23. had Relation to Gospel-Times, so it had Relation to Gospel-Worship, which is in Newness of Spirit, by confessing to God and Christ, and by believing in Christ, and not by swearing, according to the Oldness of the Letter, which doth further appear from Christ's own Words, Mat. 10. 32. *But I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before Men, him will I confess before my Heavenly Father*; so also *Rom.* 10. 9, 10. So that it is evident, that Confession under the Gospel is answerable to Swearing under the Law; for by confessing to God, and appealing to him in Witness-bearing, his Power and Omniscience is as much acknowledged, in discerning whether Truth be spoken in Witness-bearing under the Gospel, as it was under the Law by wearing; for though the Form which was shadowy changed, yet the Worship it self, which was the Substance, remaineth; and therefore if Times and Dispensations be rightly discerned, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament do agree. And as for that Text of Scripture quoted by J. S. out of *Isa.* 19. 18. *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *speak the* Language *of* Canaan, *and swear, &c. Answer,* This Scripture hath not Reference to all the People of the *Gentiles,* as is evident from the Words themselves, which only speaks of five Cities in *Egypt,* whereas the *Gentiles* inhabited many Nations; neither doth it altogether relate to Gospel-Times, when the whole People, called the *Gentiles* were to be received as the People of God, but is rather a Prophecy of the joyning of the People that inhabited those Cities in *Egypt* unto the *Jews,* and owning of their Worship, by speaking their Language, by swearing to the Lord of Hosts, and bringing their Sacrifices to the Altar of the Lord, after the Manner of the Jews, who before were Strangers to the Worship of the true God, and that by so doing, it should be a Sign and a Witness unto the Lord

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of Hosts of their Conversion unto him; for these Prophecies had a double Intendment and Accomplishment, *viz.* One in the material Temple, under the first Covenant, another in the spiritual Temple, the Church under the Gospel or New Covenant; for it is evident, that before the Coming of the Messiah, there was an Association of some of the *Gentiles* unto the Church of the *Jews*; for after the rebuilding of the Temple, and before the Death of Christ, there was a Number of Proselites out of divers Nations, both for that by Reason of the many Dispersions of the *Jews* in the Captivity, and their Commerce with other Nations, their Customs and Religion were more commonly known, and because these times were to be as a Preparative to the general Calling of the *Gentiles*: It is also evident, that upon the good Escape of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, many turned to their Religion; and the Scriptures shew to us several Examples, *Esther* 8. 17. *Acts* 2. 10. *Mat.* 23. 15. yea, the *Pharisees* took Pride in converting others to *Judaism*; so that these Prophecies did not only imply a general Conversion of the *Gentiles* simply, so as to exclude the Particular in the mean Time: Therefore as the Propheſies aforesaid had a double Meaning, so also they had a double Accomplishment, the one in the material Temple under the Law, during which Dispensation, he that blessed himself in the Earth, should bless himself in the God of Truth; and he that did swear in the Earth, should swear by the God of Truth; under which Dispensation there was also an Altar, Sacrifices and Oblations, &c. The other in the spiritual Temple, the Church under the Gospel, under which *the true Worshippers do worship the Father in Spirit and Truth*, John 4. 22. By praising God in the Spirit, and confessing unto his Name, believing in Christ Jesus, & witnessing the Truth according to Christ's Command, *let your Yea be Yea, and Nay Nay*; for when these Prophecies were given forth, the Gospel-Worship was not then fully revealed; see 1 *Pet.* 11, 12. And therefore as the Prophecies had Relation to the Time before Christ's Sufferings, they had then Relation to the Worship which was then required and practised under the Law; but when the Law was changed, there was then also a Change of those External Rites and Shadowy Things, *viz. Cursing, Swearing, Altars, Sacrifices, Oblati-*

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ons, &c. which were not of the Eſſence and Subſtance of the true Worſhip of God, although the true Worſhip of God changed not; and it is evident *Dan.* 9. 26. 27, 28 where it is ſaid, *That the Meſſiah ſhall confirm the Covenant with many for one Week, and in the midſt of the Week he ſhall cauſe the Sacrifice and the Oblations to ceaſe*; for in Chriſt all Signs had their Accompliſhment; for the Apoſtle ſaith, *Signs are not for them that believe, but for them that believe not*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 22. So that J. S. from theſe Prophecies might as well conclude, that *Chriſtians* in Goſpel-times ought to have Altars, offer Sacrifices and Oblations, as the *Jews* had and did under the Law, as that *Chriſtians* may lawfully ſwear; but *Chriſtians* in Chriſt Jeſus do believe and know, that thoſe Sacrifices in which there is a Remembrance again of Sins, the Lord under the New Teſtament hath not required, and that in Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin the Lord hath no Pleaſure; for all thoſe carnal Ordinances were impoſed (as ſaith the Apoſtle) only until the Time of Reformation; ſee *Heb.* 9. 10. *Heb.* 10. 3, 4, &c. So that we having a poſitive Command from Jeſus Chriſt, viz. *ſwear not at all*, &c. Mat. 5. 34. and that from the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes every Word is to be eſtabliſhed; and there being no Command from Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator of the New Teſtament, who is the *Chriſtians* only Law giver, Law-maker and Prince, in Matters of Faith and Worſhip, we are not bound as *Chriſtians* to the Obſervation of any Command that comes either from *Moſes* or any other, that is not our Law-maker and Maſter; and it is obſervable, that one of the moſt ſolemn Laws contained in the two Tables, *viz.* that which ordained the ſeaventh Day to be kept Holy Day, unto which is adjoyned an unchangeable Reaſon, namely, becauſe God reſted that Day, when he had made the viſible World; yet this Law is annulled and abrogated amongſt all *Chriſtians*, even from the Beginning of *Chriſtianity*, for Want of Ratification of it from our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, who is our Law-maker and Prince: And therefore *Chriſtians* in Chriſt Jeſus, and in the Faith of him, having no Command or Example from Chriſt to ſwear in any caſe, I do conclude, that Swearing in the Time of the Goſpel is no Evidence of the Converſion of any People

unto God, neither is Swearing by the Lord of Hosts that pure Language and undefiled Religion, which was at the first revealed unto *Adam* in Paradice; for it is evident, that Swearing hath defiled many, but pure Religion and true Witness-bearing never did defile any: But how should a better Account of divine Mysteries be expected from J. S. that knows so little of them, as his Writings do plainly shew: And now I proceed to his 5th and last *Argument* in the first Section of his said Book.

Arg. 5. *That the holyest* Christian *may lawfully and laudably do that, which by the Spirit of Christ, that spoke in the Prophets, hath made the doing thereof in Gospel-Times the Condition of God's accepting them for his People: But the Spirit of Christ* (saith J. S.) *in the Prophets hath made Mens learning to swear by his Name such a Condition, as upon the fulfilling thereof, he will number Men among his Disciples, account them his People that do, and root out and utterly destroy them that do not learn to swear by his Name; Therefore* (saith J. S.) *the holyest* Christian *may lawfully swear by God's Name*: And for Proof of his said Assertion he quotes *Jer.* 12. 16. *And it shall come to pass, that if they will diligently learn the Wayes of my People, to swear by my Name, the Lord liveth, as they taught my People to swear by* Baal, *then shall they be built in the midst of my People; but if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that Nation, saith the Lord*: And J. S. further saith, *That this Prophecy relates to the Time of the Gospel, for it is directed to the* Gentiles.

To which for Answer I say, That the Lord under the first Testament, when the Church multiplyed unto a Nation, and by continuance among the Idolatrous *Egyptians*, grew corrupt in Religion and Manners, the Lord instituted divers and sundry carnal Rites and Ceremonies, which were Shadows of good Things then to come, to continue until the Time of Reformation, *Heb.* 9. 1. *to ver.* 11. And amongst others an Oath or Swearing was added to Witness-bearing, which they had transgressed, as it's written, *The Law was added because of Transgression, until the Seed cam*, Gal. 3. 19. And therefore during the first Testament, in which Time this Prophecy was given forth, the Worship of God being then accompanyed with those carnal Rites,

was by those carnal Rites often called, not that Swearing or any other carnal Rite of themselves were the Worship of God, but as they were joyned and accompanyed with that which was the Worship of God, or to that in and by which God was purely worshipped, before those carnal Rites were added for a Time only; for it's evident, that before the Fall the Lord was purely worshipped without the Use of any carnal Rite or Figure; and therefore although Swearing be only mentioned in that Prophecy, yet it was but so mentioned or put for an Example, and not so to be understood, as that Swearing, being of it self but a carnal Rite or Command, did include or exclude all other Acts of the Worship of God, or that by Swearing only, without the observing the essential Part or Acts of God's Worship, the Lord would account the *Gentile*-Converts for his People, and number them amongst his Disciples; which Thing being rightly considered, will make Way for the better Understanding of those Prophecies before mentioned; and the Time being considered when they were given forth, and the Occasion of giving them forth, will much conduce to the Discovery of the Mind of the Lord concerning the fulfilling of them: Now it's evident from Jer. 12. 16. that Swearing by the Lord was not all that was intended by the Lord for the *Gentiles* to obey him in, but is only put for an Example or an Instance, as is implyed in the Words going before, viz. *If they will diligently learn the Wayes of my People*; for the Wayes and Worship of God's People then was not Swearing only; for the Lord had given his People *Israel* many other Precepts, unto all which he had required their Obedience, as well as Swearing by his Name, which was but required in some Cases only, and not generally in all Cases, and at all Times, as the essential Worship of God was; so that Swearing by the Name of the Lord was not the only Condition, as upon fulfilling thereof, the Lord would number them amongst his People; and it doth also appear by that Part of the Promise annexed to the Performance of the Condition, viz. *Then shall they be built in the midst of my People*; what People? Answer, The People of the Jews after their Return out of *Egypt* and *Babylon*, where they (when the Prophecy was given forth) were Captives: And it is also evident from Jer. 12. & Zach. 2. 11, 12.

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That this Prophecy was given forth by Way of Consolation to the afflicted Estate of the Jews, and that upon a three-fold Consideration, *viz.* 1. In that the Lord promised to bring them out of their Captivity. 2. In that he promised his *special Presence and Abode with them*, Zech. 2. 10. And 3. In that many Forreiners of other Nations round about should be won over to joyn with them, *Zech.* 2. 11. *And many Nations shall be joyned unto the Lord in that Day*; In what Day? Answer, Doubtless in that Day when the Lord should return them out of their Captivity, and that they had rebuilded the Temple, and that all Things were established until Christ's Death; for the Text speaks not simply of the Nations, but many Nations, not implying a general Conversion of the *Gentiles*; for if it should be understood only of the general Conversion of the *Gentiles* (as J. S. supposeth) to the Gospel, then how could this make for the present Comfort of the Jews, who were alwayes stiff in the Maintenance of *Moses*'s Rites and Ceremonies; all which (as well as Swearing) with the Temple and State of the Jews, were to be taken away by Christ at the general Conversion of the *Gentiles*; for (as before hath been said) it is evident, that before the coming of the Messiah, there was an Association of many *Gentiles* into the Church of the Jews, as may appear in my Answer to the fourth *Argument*: So that this Prophecy did not only (if at all) relate to the general Conversion of the *Gentiles* in Gospel Times, so as to exclude the Particular in the mean Time; for the Prophecy relating to the present Comfort of the Jews, must have Relation to the material Temple, according to God's Promise, *Zech* 2. 10. *&c.* That they should have Aid in the building of the material Temple from Strangers afar off, partly by the *Gentiles* that were Converts, and joyned with the Jews in their Religion, and partly by their Brethren that resided in *Babylon*; for it's said, *Zech.* 2. 11, 12. *That many Nations shall be joyned to the Lord in that Day, and shall be the Lord's People, and that the Lord would dwell in the midst of them, and the Lord shall inherit* Judah *his Portion in the Holy Land, and shall chuse* Jerusalem *again*; which was accomplished, at the least in Part, when the material Temple was rebuilded, and the City of *Jerusalem*; and if the Prophecy had any

Relation to the ſpiritual Temple, the Church under the Goſpel, when all both near and far off, both Jew and *Gentile* came together, as living Stones to build the Temple, whereof Chriſt was the Foundation, and his Ordinances were the VVorſhip then, and ſo far forth the Prophecy muſt have Relation unto Goſpel-Ordinances, and not to Swearing or any other carnal Rite, which were but Shadows of the good Things that then were to come, which being come, the carnal Ordinances and Rites were by God's Ordination to ceaſe: So that notwithſtanding J. S's Affirmation aforeſaid, it both was and is not only poſſible, but reaſonable, that this Prophecy ſhould have Relation to the Time before Chriſt's Death, in Reference to the Accompliſhment thereof, as aforeſaid, there being, as it is ſaid, 500 Years between the Return of the Jews out of *Babylon* after the Captivity, and the Death of Chriſt; for it's written, *The Lord was never ſlack in performing his Promiſes, in no Age leaving himſelf without Witneſs:* And therefore although Swearing by the Name of God was mentioned, it being then a carnal Ordinance or Rite, annexed to the VVorſhip of God under the firſt Teſtament, until the Time of Reformation, by VVay of Example, not that the whole VVorſhip of God, under the firſt Teſtament, conſiſted in Swearing, but is there put only for an Example, the reſt of the VVorſhip and Service of the Lord under that Teſtament being intended, yet it doth not follow, that Swearing or any other carnal Ordinance was to be in Goſpel-Times only, or any Condition, by the obſerving or performing of which the *Gentiles* were to be ingrafted into Chriſt; for the Law being changed, there was alſo a Change of theſe Conditions required by the Law; for the Law gave Life upon Condition of perfect Obedience in all Things; the Goſpel gives Life upon Condition of Repentance and believing in Chriſt Jeſus, who ſaith, *Swear not at all, &c.* And therefore J S his affirming (*That except Swearing be added to the Worſhip of God under the Goſpel, all other Wayes of confeſſing and worſhipping the true God, all other Acts of Invocation of God, are not ſerious enough to put People in a Capacity of finding Acceptance with the Lord, or accepting of them as ſincere Diſciples, or ingrafting them into the Evangelical Church*) which his Affirmation is ſo contrary to the Doctrine

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of Christ and of his Apostles and Ministers, as that I do believe, that J. S. is the first that ever adventured upon such an erroneous assertion; for it is manifest, that neither Christ Jesus or any of his Apostles or any Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, ever taught or preached any such Doctrine; but on the contrary taught and preached Faith and Repentance as the only condition under the Gospel to put people in a capacity of finding acceptance with the Lord, and being saved, as may appear from these Scriptures following with many others, viz. Mark 1. 14, 15. where it is said, *that Jesus came to Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God*, and said, *the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel*, and John 8. 24. *Christ said unto the Jews* (who doutless were Swearers) *except that ye believe that I am he, ye shall dye in your Sins*; and Joh. 3. 15, 16. It's said that *whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish but have Eternal Life; for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have Everlasting Life*. And Paul and Silas said to the Goaler (who asked them saying, *Sirs what shall I do to be saved*) *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and all thine house*, Acts 16. 30, 31. See Rom. 10. 9, to ver. 14. and Acts 13. 38, 39. *Paul* said, *Be it known unto you Men and Brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins, and by him all that believe are just fi d from all Things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of* Moses. By which Scripture it is evident, that although the *Gentiles* that joyned themselves unto the Jews Religion before Christ's Death, could not be exempted from Swearing (in such Cases where Swearing was required by the Law of *Moses*) yet after Christ was come in the Flesh, and had given forth that Command, *Swear not at all, &c.* not only the *Gentiles*, but the Jews also that believed in Christ, were by Christ Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament, freed from all Swearing, and from all other carnal Rites and Commands required by the Law of *Moses*, they were freed after Christ's Death: Now these Scriptures being true, it is evident, that Swearing by the Name of the Lord is no Condition under the Gospel, upon the Performance whereof any People, either *Jew* or *Gentile*, were admitted or retained

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as Members of the *Church of Christ* under the Gospel: And therefore the not learning to swear by the Name of God, or refusing to swear at all, doth not all render People under the Gospel obnoxious to the Dint of God's fearful Doom, as J. S. hath presumptuously and erroneously asserted: And now having answered the Subject Matter in Reference to Swearing contained in J. S. his five Arguments aforesaid, I do conclude, That Oathes are no Gospel-Ordinances, and that therefore *Christians* in Christ Jesus, and in the Faith of him, are not obliged in Witness-bearing now in Gospel Times, by or from any Command or Example in the Old Testament to swear at all, and that Christ being their only Law-maker and great Prophet, whom to hear and obey in all Things, God the Father hath commanded all Men without Respect of Persons; it doth follow, that all Christ's Disciples ought to obey his Command, *Mat.* 5. 34. *&c, But I say unto you, swear not at all, &c.* And I do further say, that *all that bear the Voice of Christ, and have his Word abiding in them, do witness Acceptance in him*, Ephes. 1. 6. without Oath or Swearing. And all they that are in him that is true, they according to the Example of the holy Men of God in all Ages, and according to the Example of the Apostle *Paul* (in Matters of great Concern) in Witness-bearing do and may call God to witness, or appeal to the Witness of God, who searcheth and knows all Hearts, concerning the Truth of their Testimony, that so *by the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established*, according to Christ's Command, *Mat.* 18. 16. which Appeal to the Witness of God simply of it self, without the Addition of somewhat more, neither was nor is either any Legal Oath or Swearing, which somewhat more being added to Witness-bearing, is that which doth give unto it the Denomination of an Oath or Swearing, as may appear from the Examples beforementioned, and as the daily Practice in the Courts of Judicature do prove: So that if a true Difference were put by Men (as the Spirit of the Lord doth put a Difference) between Matters and Things that do differ, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament do agree; but when and where Matters and Things that do differ (as Swearing and Witness bearing do differ) are confounded together, as J. S. hath confounded Swearing

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and Witneſs bearing, as if no Witneſs-bearing could be without an Oath or Swearing; and the old carnal Rites and Ordinances, which were temporary, he hath confounded with the Ordinances and Worſhip of God under the New-Teſtament, which are ſpiritual and eternal: And therefore, and for that J. S. hath aſſerted Doctrines and Concluſions contrary to the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles and Miniſters of the New Teſtament, his Doctrines and Concluſions are to be rejected by all Chriſt's Diſciples; and the Doctrines and Commands of Chriſt and his Apoſtles and Miniſters are to be received and obeyed. And as for the Matters contained in the ſecond Section of his ſaid Book, they are fully anſwer'd in my former *Teſtimony concerning Oaths and Swearing, &c.* printed in the Year 1668. and alſo in a Book, entituled, *The Caſe of the* Quakers *concerning Oathes defended as Evangelical, &c.* printed in this preſent Year 1674. And as for the Matters contained in J. S's third Section of his Book aforeſaid, they are alſo fully anſwer'd in the ſaid Book, printed 1674.

Written forth in the 7th Moneth, 1674.

Ger. Benſon.

THE END.